

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4, 6-7, 9-10 and 11-16 are pending and active in this application. Claims 11-16 were added to further define the present invention. Claim 6 was amended to correct a minor informality. Claims 7 and 9 were amended to correct minor informalities and to further define the present invention. Claim 10 was amended to further define the present invention. No new matter was added as a result of this Amendment. All of the language in the new claims is explicitly or inherently supported by the original specification. For at least the reasons set forth below, withdrawal of all outstanding rejections as they may relate to the amended claims and the new claims is respectfully requested.

Entry of Rule 116 Response

Entry of this response is requested because such response does not raise any new issues that would require further consideration and/or search. No new matter is raised by this response.

Claim 10 now includes the same limitation that is believed to be at least one reason for the patentability of claim 1, and which was previously considered by the Examiner, namely, a current measuring section that measures a current flowing through a developer-supply member. See the discussion below of claim 10.

Likewise, new independent claims 11 and 14 include a limitation that is related to a limitation that is believed to be at least one reason for patentability of claim 4, and which was previously considered by the Examiner, namely, the “timed relation” limitation. See the discussion below of claims 11 and 14.

Lastly, it is requested that the response be entered even if the application is not allowed because this response will place the application in better form for appeal by materially simplifying the issues.

If the application is not in proper form for allowance, Applicants request that the Examiner telephone the undersigned to discuss any further outstanding issues.

Request for Interview Prior to Formal Action on Amendment

Applicants request an interview prior to formal action on this response. An “Applicant Initiated Interview Request Form” accompanies this response. Please contact Applicants’ undersigned representative to schedule the interview.

Claim Objections

Claims 6, 7 and 9 were amended to correct minor informalities cited by the Examiner. Withdrawal of the claim objections is respectively requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Umeno (JP 2000-206766 A), hereinafter “Umeno.”

Patentability of claim 10 over Umeno

Amended claim 10 recites, in part,

a current measuring section that measures a current flowing through said developer-supplying member;

Umeno does not disclose or suggest a current measuring section that measures a current flowing through a developer-supply member. The Abstract and Figs. 1 and 2 of Umeno disclose a current measuring section that measures only a current flowing through a developing roller 8, which is not a developer-supplying member.

In contrast to Umeno, a preferred embodiment of the present invention discloses the above-highlighted limitation. See Fig. 2 and page 7, lines 3-16 of the current specification which clearly disclose a current measuring section 28 that measures a current flowing through a toner-supplying roller 3 (i.e., developer-supplying member). For at least these reasons, claim 10 is believed to be patentable over Umeno.

New Claims

Patentability of new independent claims 11 and 14 over Umeno

New claim 11 recites, in part:

a current measuring section that measures a current flowing through said developing member, the current being measured in timed relation with the development of the electrostatic latent image;

Umeno does not disclose or suggest that a current measuring section measures current flowing through a developing member and that a current is measured in timed relation with the development of the electrostatic latent image. Therefore, it is believed that new independent claim 11 and dependent claims 12 and 13 are patentable over Umeno and their allowance is earnestly solicited.

New claim 14 recites, in part:

a current measuring section that measures a current flowing through at least one of said developing member and said developer-supplying member, the current being measured in timed relation with development of the electrostatic latent image;

Umeno does not disclose or suggest that a current measuring section measures current flowing through at least one of a developing member and a developer-supplying member and that a current is measured in timed relation with the development of the electrostatic latent image. Therefore, it is believed that new independent claim 14 and dependent claims 15 and 16 are patentable over Umeno and their allowance is earnestly solicited.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has stated that claims 1, 2 and 4 are allowed. In addition, the Examiner indicated that claim 6 is allowable over the prior art, but objectionable for the reason stated above. Claim 6 was amended to correct a minor informality and is now in condition for allowance, therefore the objection to claim 6 should be withdrawn. Further, claims 7 and 9 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim (claim 10), but were found allowable if placed into independent form. Since claim 10 has been shown to be allowable over the cited prior art, claims 7 and 9 are also allowable.

Conclusion

Insofar as the Examiner's rejections were fully addressed, the instant application including claims 1, 2 and 4, claims 6, 7, 9 and 10 as amended, and new claims 11-16 is in condition for allowance. Issuance of a Notice of Allowability of all pending claims is therefore earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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(Date)

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